

NEWS FROM THE EAST



March 2023

Your regional team keeping in touch with u3as across the six counties of the East of England

Networks back in region again

FOLLOWING the success of the get-togethers held with Hertfordshire and Essex u3as leading to county networks being re-formed, Norfolk u3as attended a Zoom meeting on Monday, March 6.

Ten u3as were represented, with apologies from three who could not make the date and time, but wished to be updated on the outcome.

There were many excellent suggestions about the purpose and advantages of a Network.

These included future meetings of Chairs, Secretaries and Treasurers for information specific to their roles.

It was clear that there was a wealth of information that could be shared and future mentoring of area committee members (and potential committee members).



Those present agreed, Verity Jowett from Hunstanton u3a will liaise with trustee Barbara Cordina and Laurene Henderson and Jean St Clair from the regional team over arranging a meeting with the other volunteers to form a steering group.

With the enthusiasm shown by Norfolk u3as we hope this will be a great success.

Laurene Henderson,
Regional Team Member

Three other counties have the chance to join in too

YOUR East of England Regional Team has invited u3as in Suffolk to an online meeting on March 31 to discuss the idea of forming a Network for their county.

Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire u3as will be invited by the Regional Team to a joint Zoom meeting on the topic on Thursday April 13 from 10am to 11am.



Help u3as regionally

THERE is plenty of opportunity to do more for u3as by becoming a member of the East of England regional team.

We are looking for volunteers from all counties willing to assist and help u3as be the best they can for their members.

Why I volunteer

IN the course of researching some information from the main Third Age Trust website I signed up to a Zoom meeting, met Barbara Cordina on line, and found myself volunteering for the East of England Team.

Clearly old habits die hard as I first volunteered as a Brownie to earn badges!

So – why volunteer for a role with the regional u3a?, asks **Laurene Henderson**.

Well, it feels great to be really involved, make a difference and meet like minded people.

I have shared ideas (stolen some good ones) and met the most positive, articulate and interesting people.

You get to work as a team and take on as much as you wish. You make friends. You are NEVER bored.

Above all, you feel stimulated and challenged, acquire new skills and utilise the old ones.

Intrigued, my husband joined the u3a when he retired – and was volunteering for the committee within a year!

Should you volunteer? In the words of Nike and The Pink Fairies rock band – “Just Do It!”

AT my first regional meeting in July 2010, on behalf of my home u3a, I was asked if I would attend a training to become a Regional Volunteer.

Since then I have assisted three different Regional Trustees and have thoroughly enjoyed my involvement at regional and national events, says **Brian Lowes**.

I am now a Trust Volunteer and a Beacon Volunteer as well as being a member of the training team. The main benefit of this is that I can stay up to date and involved in what is happening regionally and nationally.

At regional level there is the opportunity to visit u3as and meet with committee members and group leaders and learn what they are doing and how their u3a is organised and run.

Details I can then pass to other u3as or my fellow Regional Team members to make use of.

I would recommend anyone who has finished serving on their own committee to consider joining the Regional Team to spread their expertise and help the East of England to flourish.

Have a chat about taking on the role

THOSE willing to join the Regional Team can find out more from Regional Trustee Barbara Cordina.

She will have a chat with you about the contribution you could make.

Please simply send her an email saying you are interested in assisting the Team at the address below.

barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk

Newsletter
links info

All the underlined blue text links in this PDF newsletter are hyperlinks Highlight them with your cursor, hold down the control key and click link to activate. If no response, simply copy the text and paste it into your browser.



Limebrook photo talents feature in calendar

LIMEBOOK u3a Photography Group Calendar 2023 was another sell out.

Members submitted photographs to be included in the annual project.

They were judged externally and the following prints selected.

January - Maldon Hunt by Dave Dove.

February - Call of the Wild by Brian Harris,

March - Bocking Fayre by Christine Smith,

April - Carters Steam Fayre by Heather

Stephens. May - Writtle Grass Track by

Howard Corlett, June - 70th Jubilee by

Paul Madge, July - Aldham Steam Rally by

Graham Churchill.

August - Clacton Air Show by Phil Page.

September – Wings and Wheels by Tim

Stubbings, October -Carters Steam Fair by

Edwina Ord, November - Maldon

Carnival by Jo Madge.

December - Cycle Race by Ken Russell.

Walks project praise

IF anybody needed reminding that a healthy mind resides in a healthy body, then the members of our u3as involved in the Walking Group project in September 2022 did that in no uncertain terms!

The booklet produced by Hilary Holt collated contributions from Walking and Rambling groups in our region – and they were outstanding contributions.

Each group shared their new experiences and friendships, photographs of outstanding views, mention of a few good pubs on the way and their clear enjoyment of their group. It sums up everything that our u3a stands for.

It celebrated 40 Years of the u3a movement in style and the booklet was overwhelmingly applauded by all.

Some comment examples include:

"That is impressive Barbara – and the photos of people enjoying themselves are great. Congratulations to all." (Liz Thackray)

"Thank you for this. What an amazing amount of work has gone into the booklet: writing, photographs, collating, editing - and of course the walking! It is wonderful to see other U3As in action." (Wissey u3a)

Laurene Henderson

Regional Team Member

What's happening in 2023? Next Page ...



Jane's charity cycling challenge

HALSTEAD u3a member Jane Giffould was so impressed with the local service provided by a special cancer service she decided to fundraise for it.

So she hopped on her cycle and set out to bike 1,000 miles in 100 days around local lanes.

It was all in aid of Hope for Tomorrow, a mobile unit which visits Halstead, every Tuesday.

The team enabled her to have various types of cancer treatment a three minute

cycle ride from home rather than a 45 minute car drive.

Jane said: "They help so many people that I want to support them.

"Especially as I enjoy the rides when the weather is good ... and they help me get fitter."

She kept members informed on her progress with regular reports on distances covered and in what weather.

Her Just Giving page shows £532 raised from 25 supporters

Ideas for a regional project for 2023 ...

MEMBERS of East of England Team are already looking at our next Regional Project for 2023 that will follow the success of the 2022 walks booklet.

We have already received some ideas, such as Photography groups contributions: (eg) "Through the Seasons" or "One Memorable Day"; Art groups; Craft Groups; Historical Research groups; Ancestry; Gardening Groups (or Garden Visits); to name just a few!

If you have any further ideas for a Regional Project, and we are sure you have many, please let us know by the end of March.

A decision will be taken by the Regional Team and further information on how you can contribute will follow.

We hope you will make us spoilt for choice!

**Laurene Henderson,
Regional Team Member**

Completed 2022 details

THE 2022 Walks Booklet is available to view on the East of England website publications page at <https://u3asites.org.uk/east-of-england/page/53302>

Cook for the King!

FOLLOWING a suggestion from a member on how to mark the forthcoming Coronation in May – u3a have launched - 'Cook for the King'

It involves members creating a dish that celebrates and reflects Britain in 2023.

One to become as famous as Coronation Chicken!

There are no hard and fast rules – members are asked to be creative - but please consider the guidelines and themes below.



Guidelines for submitting

We suggest the dish could reflect either or both of the following themes:

Either sustainability and environmental impact. Consider agricultural and welfare best practices in selected produce.

Or representative of the UK's partnership with the Commonwealth, celebrating the diversity of British cuisine.

- ✦ The dish must be your own creation, an original recipe to the best of your knowledge.
- ✦ You should have made the dish yourself at least once, following your recipe.
- ✦ We recommend keeping the dish as simple as possible.
- ✦ All submissions must include at least one image of the dish; up to four images can be included.

You may submit multiple recipes but entries must be submitted with a completed form from:

https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/cook-for-the-king#recipe_form

Dishes will be judged based on the recipe and images only - the judges will not make the dishes.

Deadline for submissions is 11 pm on Monday April 10.

The winner will be announced ahead of the Coronation, and the winning recipe will be showcased on the national website.

A shortlist of recipes will be sent to the Palace so they can see just how talented we are in the u3a movement.



Hadrian's Wall u3a day is nearly here

FREE online activities, guided tours, special talks and fringe activities from charcoal landscape drawing to creative writing are all part of the festival of learning surrounding Off The Wall.

This u3a project culminates at the wall on May 10 with a day of activity and fun.

It's open to u3a members and full details are on the national website.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/off-the-wall>





Miriam Humphrey The Lake at Three Counties Way and Linton.

Haverhill u3a enjoys photo successes

THE Camera Group of Haverhill and District u3a has scored a notable success as two members had their images accepted for inclusion in the 2023 calendar produced by Haverhill Library which is part of Suffolk Libraries.

Even better was that each member had two images selected.

Miriam Humphreys took the honours for March with 'The Lake at Three Counties Way' and April with 'Linton'.

Sheila McHale supplied the images for November with 'St Mary's Church' and December with 'The Town Christmas Tree'.

The group leader and management committee of Haverhill and District u3a are immensely proud of this achievement which

demonstrates the advantage of always carrying a camera and knowing how to use it which all u3a photographic groups across the country strive to encourage.

It is the second year running that our members have excelled when submitting entries and we wish them every success for the coming years.

Copies of the calendar can be purchased from Haverhill Library, Camps Road, Haverhill CB9 8HB, or by calling 01440 848095.

It features images taken in the locality throughout the seasons.

**Peter Tatam,
Groups Co-ordinator,
Haverhill and District u3a**



Sheila McHale St Mary's Church and Town Christmas Tree.

Overcoming fears of risk assessments

OUR Regional Trustee, Barbara Cordina, recently sent a helpful reminder to all u3as of the latest advice on Risk Assessments.

Those who can cast their minds back to the days of full time work, may remember the Curse of the Risk Assessment for their departments and all the attendant paperwork (sometimes running to multiple folders!).

News that the u3a insurance for group activities advise a risk assessment has therefore caused some consternation.

Rest assured, the simple tick box proforma risk assessments, that can be found on the main u3a website at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice> are quick and easy to complete.

Group leaders are simply required to look for any obvious hazards (trailing cables, etc) and minimise the risk and warn group participants.



Two useful guides: a Power Point and a Word document check list were sent out to all Chairs and Secretaries on March 7 which will be very helpful for all Group Leaders, Group Co-ordinators and Committee members.

They are also available to u3as on request.

Laurene Henderson,
Regional Team Member

Film hopes for Maldon u3a author

AUTHOR Patrick Forsyth from Maldon u3a could have his novel *Once a Thief* turned into a television series or film after signing a contract.

Members will recall he spoke about it at the 2022 East of England Region Conference.

The story follows a young woman who takes on a job which leads her in “unforeseen directions and put her life in danger”.

Four of his novels are set in Maldon, with ordinary people caught up in mystery or crime.

Mr Forsyth has written more than 100 books which have been translated into 24 languages.

He said: “I have signed a contract allowing a screenplay to be written of the story. “It is encouraging that the story has



prompted someone to want this,

“Although it may presently be a million miles from seeing it on television or in the cinema, well... you never know.

“I will try not to get too excited while keeping my fingers crossed.”

Ray Hardisty, PR and Media Adviser



Members of Singing for Pleasure entertain at the anniversary Open Day.

Chatteris celebrates with 'open' birthday

CHATTERIS u3a members celebrated their 10th Anniversary in the King Edward Centre in Chatteris with presentations from many of their groups.

Those taking part were The Banned Book Club, Living Well with Arthritis, Family History, Tai Chi, Wine Appreciation, Board Games and many others.

There was a flower display competition which involved guessing the number of flowers used and a pumpkin carving contest.

The Singing for Pleasure and the Guitar Groups performed a song to the tune of Congratulations and Celebrations, which was specially written for the occasion by one of their members.

The final verse went:

"Congratulations and happy birthday we want everyone to celebrate and say

"Congratulations and jublations, we want you all to know we welcome you here today.

"We want you all to know our branch is 10 today."

"We want you all to know our branch is 10 today."

There was a celebration birthday cake accompanied by tea and coffee.

My thanks to Steve Wright, the Chatteris u3a Committee and Group Leaders for the warm welcome I received.

Brian Lowes,
East of England and Trust Volunteer

Online events in the pipeline

EAST u3as having at least one committee member attend a Third Age Trust presentation on insurance cover has been suggested, in email to officers, by Regional Trustee Barbara Cordina on March 28 from 10am to 11.30am.

Your Regional Team is hosting part two of the Second World War presentation on April 19 from 10am to Noon.

Invitations are being sent out shortly and those u3a members who attended part one will be given priority booking.



Five join in birthday cake cutting

MANY hands of present and past chairs at Witham and District (Essex) u3a launched its 25th anniversary year.

Current chairman Ray Hardisty was joined by Shirley Mann, Bill Watson, Mandy Marshall and Alan Stevens.

The 'five chairs' ceremony took place at the start of the January monthly meeting which had a birthday flavour.

Promotional flyer of members liking u3a

MEMBERS of Witham and District (Essex) u3a took time to jot down why they like the u3a.

Their opinions were turned into a four page A5 flyer to be used to promote the organisation.

It was launched at the first monthly meeting of the 25th anniversary year ... and members asked to pin it up wherever they could around the town.

Chairman Ray Hardisty said: "There is nothing so powerful as members themselves talking of their own organisation.

"Explaining in their own words why they support u3a and what it does.



"So it was great to see the flyers on town notice boards, on supermarket display areas, inside church porches and the town information centre and community hub."

Ray Hardisty, PR and Media Adviser



25 promotional events in one year!

WITHAM and District (Essex) u3a has set itself the awesome target of 25 promotional activities during its 25th anniversary year.



View from Inside a tree on one of the garden tours.

Sawbridgeworth trip

SIXTY one Sawbridgeworth u3a members set off for a five day trip based in Wells, Somerset, the smallest city in England.

We stopped en route at Aerospace Bristol and its wealth of transport items including a Concorde, fully fitted out as it was on its last flight, which we were able to board.

On the second day we visited the Hestercombe Gardens and the Coates English Willow Visitor Centre at Stoke St Gregory where we learnt how to grow and harvest willow.

Our next day in Wells began at the cathedral and involved two excellent tours by local guides and an afternoon spent at the Bishop's Palace and the tranquil gardens.

Day four saw us travel by coach to Bishop's Lydeard where we picked up the steam train to Minehead, then Dunster and a secret garden this time.

On our way back to Sawbridgeworth we stopped off at a vineyard called the Aldwick Estate for a tour, talk and wine sampling.

Thanks to organiser Carol Dixon-Smith, Sawbridgeworth u3a Events Organiser and Vice Chair, for arranging everything so well.

We all arrived home having learnt so much along the way because the trip really had something for everyone.

Mary Stewart
Member of Sawbridgeworth u3a



Carol Dixon-Smith dresses for the cathedral while the trip coach driver ignores wine!

Start of influencing and social change

FOUR u3as from the East of England were represented when Influencing and Social Change was launched by the u3a.

One of the two trainers was our own PR and Media Adviser Ray Hardisty, flying the flag for Witham and District (Essex).

Others at the session were from Rodings, Halstead and Whittlesey and District.

The presentation explained support and help from national office would be available for u3as taking up local issues in line with their constitutions.

Matters reflected included reduction in banking services, litter collecting, improving



Regional PR and Media Adviser Ray Hardisty turned trainer at the first session of Influencing and Social Change.

shopping for the elderly and disabled and climate change.

Next month, the same attendees will meet to discuss issues they want to tackle.

Stansted u3a war talk

STANSTED Mountfitchet u3a's first Saturday Morning Seminar of 2023 was a great success.

Nearly 80 people attended to hear David Morson discuss the history of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

He took us back to the 9th Century where we discovered the founding of Kievan Rus by Swedish Varangians, the forerunner of modern day Ukraine.

We learnt about the moving borders of the area over the centuries and the famines imposed on Ukraine by Stalin, bringing us up to date to the fall of the USSR in the 1990s.

Indeed, Russia even signed a treaty to guarantee the borders of the new countries formed out of that collapse.

We all came away with a much clearer idea of the history leading to this terrible war invasion that will help us to see through the current Russian propaganda.

**Sally Rich and Pauline Green,
Stansted Mountfitchet u3a**



Members of Stansted Mountfitchet u3a spent a Saturday morning learning details of the Ukraine-Russia conflict.



Trio of creative publicity from Aylsham and District, Great Yarmouth and Witham.

Trees promoting u3a through festive style

FOR the first time, u3a Aylsham and District supported St Michael's of Aylsham Christmas Tree event in 2022 by decorating our own tree for the event.

It was great to chat to people and let them know about u3a Aylsham and District and the opportunities we offer.

Several of our members helped out, either by donating decorations, dressing the tree or more importantly standing for an hour or two letting folk know about our u3a and what we do.

We enrolled two new members following the event, so it was worthwhile standing in the cold church chatting ... that's chatting not chattering!

Jean St Clair, Chair

AS part of their recruitment drive, and to get members into the Christmas mood, Great Yarmouth u3a entered a display into the Great Yarmouth Minster 'Christmas Tree Festival'.

Group members were encouraged to provide baubles pertaining to their group activity to hang on the tree, and it was incredible to see what they achieved.

From crochet cotton reels by the Needlecraft Group, to Garden Lovers Group snow-globes, Ramblers paper Christmas trees, Whist Group playing-card tri-folds, Book Group miniature novels and not forgetting the origami angels.

It was all there to show what a talented lot they are and what you can accomplish by joining your local u3a.

Terry Wing

PROMOTING their u3a was the incentive for Witham and District (Essex) members to take part in the annual festival of Witham parish church.

Among a building full of trees by various organisations, the decorations and associated items had to tell the story.

Stars promoted interest groups and its many activities while leaflets around the base gave visitors the chance to learn more about what the u3a is and does.

Jane Barton and Dawn Wilding

**Town trail
thanks
to the u3a**

KING's LYNN has a town trail for visitors thanks to the town's u3a. It was a Shared Learning Project and more details on such partnerships are available from regional shared learning adviser Ann Higgins by emailing higgiann68@aol.co.uk



Photographic Group members and the display of photos in the library.

Brightlingsea event

Brightlingsea u3a decided to promote the 40th anniversary of u3a by holding an exhibition of photography group pictures in our local library.

Our group includes a range of abilities using a variety of equipment with none being in the expert category, but all are enthusiasts.

Each member was invited to submit pictures which were printed as 5x7 inch and then mounted with a few at A4 size.

This gave us a total of 50 pictures.

The library made a large display board available as well as our own boards so we

set up the display to run for four weeks.

We actually had enquiries while the display was being set up!

Our efforts meant the 40th anniversary was also publicised through local social media and web sites.

The feedback from the librarian has been very positive with our latest leaflets being taken so we are pleased with the outcome.

Good publicity was achieved for both local and national u3a and we hope some new members.

**David Green, Chair,
Brightlingsea u3a**



Stepping out ... Great Yarmouth members enjoy early blooming spring.

Walking among flowers

GREAT Yarmouth u3a Rambler's Group embarked on their Valentine's Day snowdrop walk in North Burlingham woods.

After a foggy start, over twenty members enjoyed the early spring sunshine on a ramble that took them through a expansive carpet of the spring flowering blooms.



Never mind the month Garden Lovers Group members go festive early for a calendar.

Dressing the part at Great Yarmouth u3a

MEMBERS of the newly formed Great Yarmouth u3a Garden Lovers Group gathered for their November meeting dressed to impress for Christmas. Thirty-three members assembled for a

yuletide photograph for the December page of the u3a's 2023 calendar.

The other month's entries are plant pictures taken by the members.

Terry Wing, Great Yarmouth u3a

Change in your East of England u3a Team



BEST wishes to Marilyn Walker who has resigned from the Team for personal reasons after liaising with many of you through organising regional events Including the 2022 Conference, Forums and Workshops.

She will be missed.

Help, advice and support for u3as across the East

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